SPAWN
THE DARK AGES
28
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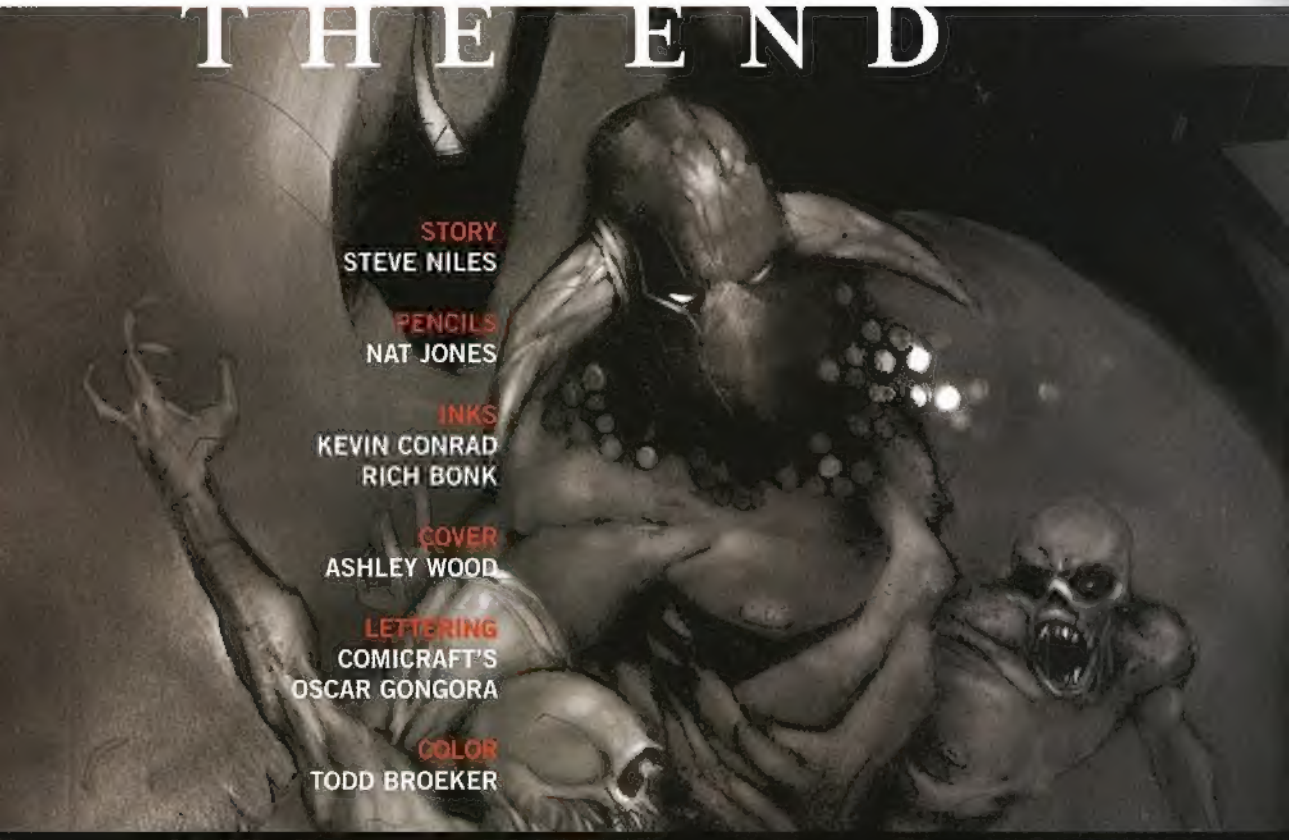
TODD McFARLANE AND IMAGE COMICS PRESENT

THE END



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SUMMARY

With the help of an incantation by Gareth, Covenant destroys the necroplasmically charged Gui by chopping off his head and easily killing him. Too easily, as it turns out, for just when all seems well, the necroplasm that was splattered during the fight with Gui has sunk into the ground and created something even more evil. Covenant, Gareth and Cog are faced with the personification of living death: all the dead bodies in the cathedral have come together to form a monster. It is the plague. The monster kills Gareth and swallows Covenant whole. With the help of skills learned from Cog and magic learned from Dumas, the Hellspawn escapes from the monster.

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There is a tale told of a man who returned from Hell to reclaim his land, his people, and his humanity.
THEY WILL BE COMING AFTER YOU. YOU ARE AWARE OF THAT, ARE YOU NOT?
I'LL BE READY.
WILL YOU?
BUT NOW, I WISH TO RETURN HOME. WE SHOULD BE ON OUR WAY.
I WON'T BE TRAVELING ON WITH YOU.
YOU ARE NO LONGER HELLSPAWN. MY QUEST IS TO FIND THE NEXT AND BREAK THE CURSE.

THERE CAN BE NO OTHER WHILE I STILL LIVE.
YOU TRUST THE WORDS OF THE DAMNED TOO MUCH, COVENANT. THESE ARE THE CREATORS OF LIES. DO NOT BE SURE OF ANYTHING THEY HAVE TOLD YOU.
QUITE A DIFFERENT DEPARTURE THAN LAST TIME, EH?
INDEED. THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE. YOUR GUIDANCE HAS ENLIGHTENED MY PATH.
YOU HAVE IMPRESSED ME COVENANT. I THOUGHT MANY OF YOUR ACTIONS TO BE FOOLISH, BUT NOW I SEE THAT YOU ALWAYS HAD YOUR EYE ON A GOAL. YOU HAD TO DO IT THE WAY YOU FELT BEST SUITED YOU. I AM SORRY FOR THE WAY I TREATED YOU.

GOOD-BYE, COGLIOSTRO.
GOOD LUCK TO YOU COVENANT. UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN.
AND TO YOU.
"And to you."

A days walk later...
OH! MY LORD IT IS YOU! THANK GOD YOU HAVE RETURNED!
IT CAME TWO NIGHTS AGO... TOOK THE BOY... MURDERED THE TROOPS... ...I TRIED TO STOP THE ATTACKS... BUT IT KEPT COMING... D... DRAGGING US AWAY ONE BY ONE... MY LORD, THE WOODS ARE AWASH WITH BLOOD...
...I HAVE FAILED YOU, LORD COVENANT.
As he takes in the carnage, Covenant cannot ignore the similarities to the events that brought Rhyll to its knees and sent a Hellspawn fleeing.
The sheer violence of the attack. The animal-like injuries. The utter devastation. The evil.
Virtually identical to the day he blacked-out so long ago.
YOU FAILED NO ONE.
WHERE IS THE BOY?
D...DISAPPEARED THE EVE BEFORE THE FIRST ATTACK. IT IS MY FAULT! I SEARCHED THE WOOD, BUT I COULD NOT FIND HIM.
YOU DID WELL. YOU DID THE MOST A FIGHTER CAN DO IN BATTLE... YOU SURVIVED.
THE WOODS ARE CLEARLY TOO DANGEROUS. WE WILL STAY HERE WITH OUR FALLEN AND GATHER THEM.

This is horrible!
It is necessary.
BUT WE CANNOT HELP THEM. THEY ARE GONE. AND WE ARE IN THE OPEN!
WE FACE THIS BEAST OF THE WOOD AND STARE INTO ITS EYES. THIS IS THE ONLY WAY.
PERHAPS... WE SHOULD FLEE.
IF WE RUN, WE WILL NOT HAVE THE PLEASURE OF SEEING THIS BEAST DIE.
BUT, I WOULD NOT JUDGE YOU HARSHLY IF YOU CHOSE TO RETREAT. THIS IS MY BATTLE. I KNOW THAT.
NO. I STAY AND FIGHT WITH YOU.

The minutes of the night crawl. The only sound, the crackling of torches and the pounding of two anxious hearts.
ALL MY LIFE I CRAVED BATTLE, BUT NOW, WAITING HERE, I QUESTION MY OWN DESIRE.
YOU HAVE A WARRIOR'S SOUL. YOU ARE DRAWN TO BATTLE AS I WAS IN LIFE.
I HAVE ALWAYS BELIEVED THAT WE ARE DESTINED TO BE WHAT WE ARE.
FOR US, WHETHER WE WANT IT OR NOT, WHETHER THROUGH BRAVERY OR STUPIDITY...
...WE ARE PROTECTORS.
SNAP
THERE! SOMETHING MOVES!

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COVENANT.

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE WITH THE BOY?
THERE NEVER WAS A BOY, FOOL.
WHEN WE CAME TO YOUR VILLAGE FOR THE SLAUGHTER, THE BOY WAS AMONG OUR VICTIMS. WE USED HIS BODY AS VESSEL TO FOLLOW YOU AND WATCH YOU.
THEN IT WAS YOU WHO DESTROYED RHYLL!
IT WAS. YOU LAY THERE ON YOUR THRONE ASLEEP WHILE WE MASSACRED YOUR PEOPLE.
DID THE BOY GAIN YOUR TRUST? DID HE TUG AT YOUR HEART?
DO YOU FEEL CHEATED?
NOW YOU KNOW HOW WE FELT =GAHG= WHEN YOU CHEATED US!

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GAAAAAH!
STAY BACK RAVEN!
WHAT S...?!

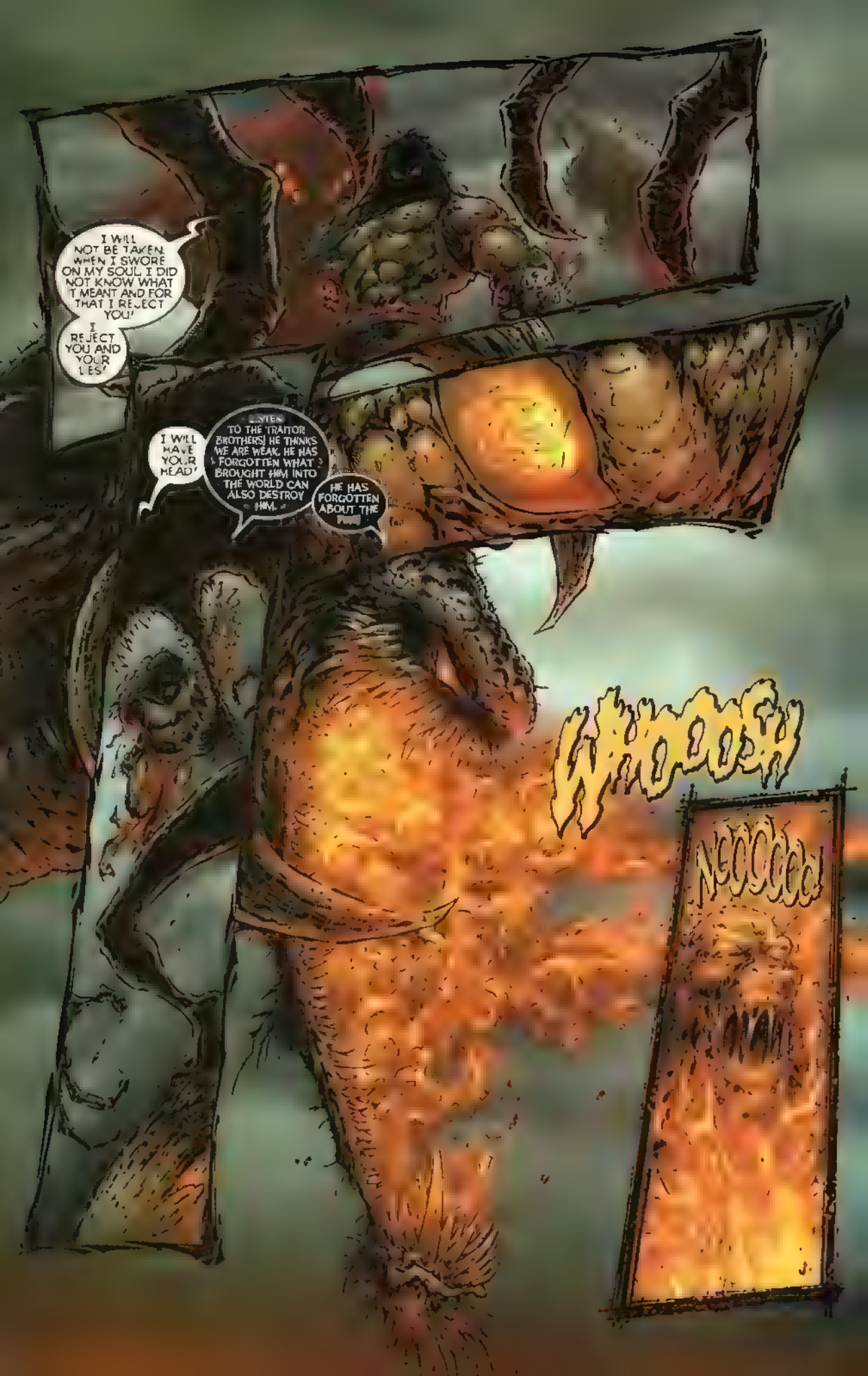
I DECLARE WAR ON YOUR UNHOLY HOST AND THIS IS WHAT HE SENDS TO DO HIS BIDDING?
WE WILL DRAG YOUR DECEIVING SOUL DOWN INTO THE PIT!
I am VENGEANCE! I am the Punisher of SOULS!
WHY DON'T YOU RUN ALONG OR I WILL HAVE TO STEP ON YOU
Laugh all you like, Covenant! Soon we will spread our cancer throughout the land. You will pray forgiveness we will...
YOU SAY WE BIT ALL I SEE IS YOU LITTLE MAGGOT
Arrogant fool. I beg to differ...
...I did not come alone. I come with...

...The Five Brothers Philebiac!
HOW LONG DID YOU THINK YOU COULD HIDE FROM US WILLEPHANG?
NOW LARGE!

R RAVEN... FLEE.
NOT SO CONFIDENT AS YOU WERE, AYE?
BEG FOR YOUR LIFE COVENANT! BEG LIKE YOU BEGGED AT THE FEET OF THE MASTER!
GROVEL!
YOU CAN NOT CROSS THE MASTER!
IS THAT YOUR NEW LOVE HELLSPAWN? IS THAT THE WOMAN WHO WOULD REPLACE THE ONE YOU KILLED?
T TE.. TE..
WHAT?! SNIVELING SUPPLICANT! WHAT?!

I TELL YOU'RE MASTER HE CAN CHOKE ON H S DEA!
RAVEN GET OUT OF HERE! SAVE YOURSELF!
VILE CREATURES, COME AND TAKE ME. KILL ME IF YOU CAN!
MY BROTHER! THE FOOL STILL THINKS THIS IS ABOUT DEATH!
IDIOT!
HE THINKS HE KNOWS!
IT'S NEVER BEEN ABOUT THE DYING!
IT'S ALWAYS BEEN ABOUT... THE PAIN!

AHHHH!!!
THE MASTER HAS A PLAN! AN AGREEMENT WAS MADE! YOU BECOME THE BEAST! YOU TRY TO RID YOURSELF OF THE GIFT BESTOWED UPON YOU! NOW YOU WILL PAY IN PAIN!
PREPARE TO BE RETURNED TO THE MASTER!
AAAARGH!
I WILL NOT!
HE STILL HAS SOME FIGHT IN HIM! IMPRESSIVE!
STAND DOWN OR FACE MY SWORD CREATURE
HOW SAD. YOU STILL HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU FACE.


I WILL NOT BE TAKEN. WHEN I SWORE ON MY SOUL I DID NOT KNOW WHAT IT MEANT AND FOR THAT I REJECT YOU!
I REJECT YOU AND YOUR LES!
I WILL HAVE YOUR HEAD!
LISTEN TO THE TRAITOR BROTHERS! HE THINKS WE ARE WEAK. HE HAS FORGOTTEN WHAT BROUGHT HIM INTO THE WORLD CAN ALSO DESTROY HIM.
HE HAS FORGOTTEN ABOUT THE
WHOOSH
NOOOO!
NOAH

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BUBUMP
The sound comes. An odd familiar pounding in his chest... his heart... it beats.
Without the Necroplasm, his organs live!
AND NOW, COVENANT... WE TAKE YOU BACK.
ATTACK!
They are killing him.
AAAHH
And it is then, he sees her.
His love, Shiann.
BA
IAIN, LET GO. THEY CANNOT TAKE YOU IF YOU DIE. THEY CAN NOT TAKE YOU A SECOND TIME.

LET GO, AND COME TO ME.
BUMP
Silence. So sudden.
And it is over. Hell has failed.
It is one of many tales of the Hellspawn. It is not a simple story. Nor one with a moral. Nor one without loose-ends tied neat as a bow.
It is simply the story of a man who returned from Hell to reclaim his land, his people, and his humanity.
But in the end, he found salvation in his heart.
The End.

Epilogue.

ALL SCANS BY

JIVC79